AKATHIST TO THE ROMANIAN SAINTS FROM THE COMMUNIST PRISONS
(14 May – official feastday in the Romanian Patriarchate)

Troparion, 1st voice:

The true witnesses of Christ have valiantly stood against Satan's schemes, and neither persecution, nor imprisonment, nor torments, nor chains have frightened them, but with power from on high they have guarded the faith and the Romanian nation. For their prayers, Christ our God, save our souls.

Kontakion 1:
The chosen Confessors of Christ, the adornment of our Church, those who have endured torments and mockings in prison, the true soldiers of the Lord, who by the power of the Cross have put to shame the servants of Satan and in heaven pray for us, we are eager to praise them, saying: Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the Golgotha of the nation!

Ikos 1:
From the icon and from the altar you set out to defend the right-faith and the Romanian nation from the atheistic wrath, and neither persecution nor imprisonment terrified you, but you stood firm against Satan's schemes, for which we rejoice and praise you, saying:
Rejoice, ye lily souls
Rejoice that no torment has defiled you.
Rejoice, for you have overcome the bondage of your nation.
Rejoice, for you have consecrated the earth with blood.
Rejoice that the enemies of Christ have persecuted you.
Rejoice that the Lord Jesus has sanctified you.
Rejoice, you were crushed, but you have risen again.

Rejoice that the thought of the saints has given you strength
Rejoice that your lives have been prayer and weeping
Rejoice, that you have burned for everything
Rejoice, that the gift of the Archangel has overshadowed you.
Rejoice, for by the power of the Cross you overcame.
Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison the Golgotha of the nation have climbed!

2nd Kontakion:
In wrath the blasphemous Beast was arrayed against the Church of Christ, and the whole world was terrified at her terrible iniquities; but you saints wisely, and with good counsel, and with manhood, with singing to God, have withstood the ungodly: Alleluia!

2nd Ikos:
The Christian settlement of the world was shaken, and the powers of darkness were foaming, and the soldiers of Christ, not enduring the profanations of the godless, hastened to bloody Spain, where they gladly received the death of martyrs, defending the holy relics and holy icons, as true Confessing Martyrs of the iconoclastic ages; for whom with gratitude we give thanks:
Rejoice, defenders of the Romanian nation.
Rejoice, worthy sons of the ancestral soil
Rejoice, that Ion Moța and Vasile Marin have given you a living example
Rejoice, that they went happily to their deaths
Rejoice, that at their graves you pronounced a holy covenant
Rejoice, that in poverty you promised to live
Rejoice that you have renounced earthly joys.
Rejoice that you have committed to serve your country.
Rejoice that you have crossed mountains of suffering
Rejoice that most of you sacrificed your youth!
Rejoice, for through you your nation has come to fulfillment.

Rejoice that your sorrow has borne fruit
Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the Golgotha of the nation!

3rd Kontakion:
The enemies of the Cross and the sellers of the land sought to tear the Romanian soul from Christ, but a valiant defender arose with the soul of the Archangel, who laid down his life for the law of his ancestors, saying: "He who fights, even alone, for God and his nation, will never be defeated"; and now, victorious, with the angels in heaven, to him they sing unceasingly, " Alleluia!

3rd Ikos:
The murderous tyrant and the ungodly Jewess, not being able to bear seeing your pure souls burning with love for faith and nation, diabolically commanded that you should be carried by night into the forest and strangled, then riddled with bullets, cast into a pit, burned with acid, and covered with heavy stone slabs, but neither the grave nor death held you, but to the true Life you have moved, for which you hear from us such things as these:
"Rejoice, ye that shed tears on the cheek of the land.
Rejoice, ye souls sorely tried
Rejoice that you knew you were going to die.
Rejoice that you parted with serenity
Rejoice that though they have killed you, you are alive today
Rejoice, for your love is sung by the fir-wood
Rejoice that they tried to hide you, but you shine brighter.
Rejoice, that in heaven with Christ you celebrate together
Rejoice, for ever and ever you are remembered.
Rejoice that your love unites the Romanians.
Rejoice, that together with all the Romanian martyrs you have willed the resurrection of the nation

Rejoice, Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the nation's Golgotha!

4th Kontakion:

Satan's minions were terrified by your strength and faith, Saints, and thinking to destroy you, they set out in fury against you in the prisons of Râmnicu Sărat, Miercurea Ciuc, Brasov and Vaslui, and in the dreadful "night of vengeance" you crowned yourselves with the death of martyrs, chanting to God: Hallelujah!

4th Ikos:

The attacks of the lawless ones did not terrify you, brave Confessors, but realizing that you would be killed, in the courtyard of the camp you all knelt down and in the silence of the night you humbly said the prayer of the Our Father, and then the bullets came pouring down upon you, while a priest in prison was secretly performing the last service for you and for those who were to die, for which we praise you, saying:

Rejoice that you have gone with Christ to death.

Rejoice, that to the Christian race you have given yourselves as a sacrifice.

Rejoice, for the executioners have marveled at your behavior.

Rejoice that your strong faith won them over.

Rejoice, for though you were slain in merciless slaughter, you offered yourselves like lambs.

Rejoice that you sing to the Lord Jesus in heaven.

Rejoice that your holy bodies now work wonders.

Rejoice that your sufferings for your nation have won you crowns.

Rejoice, you who have not been humiliated by the power of the Lord.

Rejoice that you have grown stronger as beloved sons of God.

Rejoice that you have borne the sorrow of a nation crucified.

Rejoice that your souls have been sanctified by the love of the Lord.

Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the Golgotha of the nation!

5th Kontakion:
Satan himself descended to ruin you, Holy Confessors, in the terrible prison of Pitesti, and the bold executioner hired to crush your souls utters blasphemies; but you, Saints, having hope of deliverance in God, to Him with tears you sing, " Alleluia!

5th Ikos:
The holy angels hid their faces, not being able to suffer the foolishness of the haters of God, that on Passion Friday a young man was crucified on the wall, and the walls of the jail were shaking with those who were slain; but in the depths of hell God gave you strength and might, for which we praise you, saying:
Rejoice, you martyrs who have suffered much.
Rejoice that many have struck you without your will.
Rejoice, because you prayed for them, forgave them and even loved them.
Rejoice, for your minds were not shaken from the faith.
Rejoice that your faith has shone more brightly.
Rejoice, for you were kneeling only to the Lord.
Rejoice, for the Word of God has made you new.
Rejoice, for no one has parted you away from the Living Water.
Rejoice, for you have been crowned with everlasting happiness.
Rejoice, for you have surpassed the Great Martyrs.
Rejoice, for you have adorned yourselves with great adornments
Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the Golgotha of the nation!

6th Kontakion:
Your torturers, those of a different race, thought that in the prison of Aiud they would lose even your remembrance, Saints, and they threw your long-suffering bodies into the ravine of the "Hill of Slaves", not realizing that no shroud can hide the light of those who praise God unceasingly, singing to Him, " Hallelujah!

6th Ikos:
The prison of Aiud has been a place of prayer for you, for there you have spent unceasingly in fasting and vigil, you have acquired the awakening of mind and humility of heart, and you have learned the Holy Scriptures, and at night kneeling with tears you have prayed for your dead and for those who were persecuting you, for which we praise you, saying:
Rejoice, holy crown-bearers.
Rejoice that you have chosen the good fight.
Rejoice, that you have fought the good fight doubly more.
Rejoice that you have subdued the passions within you
Rejoice, that you have wisely stood your executioners.
Rejoice, that even those who hated you, you won for God.
Rejoice, for you have not debased your creed.
Rejoice that your hearts have been steeled against evil.
Rejoice, that in the fire of holiness you were exalted.
Rejoice that the love between you has blessed you.
Rejoice, that you have suffered all things, giving thanks to God for us.
Rejoice, that for your holy sacrifice the power of Jesus has strengthened you.
Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the Golgotha of the nation!

7th Kontakion:
The demon-possessed executioners full of hatred set you against one another, to speak evil or to smite one another, but truly holier than the great confessors you have shown yourselves, that you would rather die yourselves than sin with the word against your brethren, and you endured rather to be yourselves crushed than to injure your neighbor; and for your wonderful evangelical love we keep your feast today, crying out: Alleluia!

7th Ikos:
The human mind cannot comprehend the cruelty of the torments which you have endured, Saints, the hunger, the cold, the beatings, the humiliations, but above all the soul-crushing and spiritual torments to which you have been subjected like no others in the whole history of the Church of Christ, for which we praise you, saying:
Rejoice, holy souls in broken bodies.
Rejoice, ye minds enlightened in divine fire.
Rejoice, for Satan has asked to persecute you and has not defeated you.
Rejoice, that the Lord God has shown you as His valiant disciples on earth.
Rejoice, that your martyred company has endured millions of years of imprisonment.
Rejoice that for the beauty of your souls Christ has given you heavenly power.
Rejoice that you have suffered much for the witness of Christ's every word.
Rejoice, because you have shown that through the endurance of suffering - confession and thanksgiving are made to God.
Rejoice that snow flowers have fallen on your tomb.
Rejoice that the angels invisibly wept for you.
Rejoice that you have climbed mountains of sorrow
Rejoice that the Lord has taken you to Himself.
Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the Golgotha of your nation!

8th Kontakion:
Who will sing the song of the Lord in the labor of your slavery, O Holy Confessors, for you have not labored to knead stones and bricks, but with weary arms you have moved mountains of earth from their places, and you have made the Danube a bed of tears and blood, but today at the White Gate and at Periprava the voice of your suffering is unceasingly raised in the Liturgy, singing: Hallelujah!

8th Ikos:
The waters have uttered a voice, and the depths of the awful Canal have trembled, for there is no speech that is not heard and no sorrow that does not gush forth; and we, saints, hearing the voice of your suffering from the depths, speak to you such things as these:
Rejoice, ye souls, strong as the mountains of old.
Rejoice, ye storm-tossed trees
Rejoice, ye that have labored in heat and frost.
Rejoice, you have sanctified the ground with blood.
Rejoice, you have endured nakedness and hunger
Rejoice, for with tears you dug inside the rock
Rejoice, for in sweat you made your way in stone
Rejoice, for you have received blows as payment
Rejoice, for you were scattered beneath the waves
Rejoice, you've rested under the shore and sand
Rejoice, your weary bodies have been crushed
Rejoice, your souls have borne fruit
Rejoice, O Holy Confessors, who in prison the Golgotha of the nation have you climbed!

9th Kontakion:
Light has dawned in the dungeon of the sufferers of Targu Ocna, for like a sun has shone in it, serene in soul and countenance, the Saint of the Romanian prisons, the comfort of the suffering and the glory of the needy, he who in the wakefulness and prayer of the heart, having spent, the gift of the Holy Spirit has obtained, and the end before knowing, with joy has moved to the Lord, singing: Alleluia!

9th Ikos:
"Love those who persecute you," Christ commanded, and you saints have fulfilled his word, that in Targu Ocna on the night of the Nativity of the Lord a dying priest asked to be brought to the one who had tormented him so terribly, and gently comforting him, he said, "I forgive

you with all my heart, and I believe that Christ, who is better than we are, will also forgive you." And he, repenting, with tears confessed his sins, and the same night they both departed to the Lord in peace, and we marveling at the power of love, we praise you, saying:
Rejoice, ye followers and doers of the commandments of God.
Rejoice, ye wise men, despisers of earthly glory, and lovers of heavenly glory.
Rejoice, for you have gladly borne the prayer of Jesus unceasingly.
Rejoice, that the gift of the Holy Spirit has overshadowed you in all your trials and prayers.
Rejoice, for the gospel has been your only and steadfast guide.
Rejoice that through your orthodox diligence you have found enlightenment and grace
Rejoice that Valerius has shone like a sun among you.
Rejoice that you have called him "the saint of prisons".
Rejoice, that by his example he has raised up many holy supplicants.
Rejoice that his soul was as white as a lily
Rejoice, that the angels mourned with sighing at his unknown grave.
Rejoice, that heaven wrapped him in snowy shrouds
Rejoice, Holy Confessors, who in prison the Golgotha of the Romanian nation you have climbed!

10th Kontakion:
Your persecutors then tormented your bodies and souls, and today their followers torment you, for they change your countenances to turn the eyes of the faithful from your holiness to the human weaknesses which you have also overcome; but you do not in any way reveal yourselves to those who lie about you, for they cannot understand you, but you offer yourselves to those who humbly honor you, chanting to God: Alleluia!

10th Ikos:
The joy of the Resurrection shone in the dark mine of Baia Sprie, when in the bowels of the earth the imprisoned priests with trembling cried,

"Come and take light!"; the bell-like augers began to ring, the lamps were lighted, and the prisoners kneeling with tears sang, "Christ is risen!", of which marvelous things we praise you, crying:
Rejoice, you who were buried alive, but your souls you lift up to the third heaven.
Rejoice, that you did not desire to deny Christ, but confessed Him with boldness.
Rejoice, because on Good Friday they gave you meat in mockery and you received it not.
Rejoice that the blasphemies of unbelievers have not shaken the strength of your faith.
Rejoice that in every prayer you kept the Resurrection in the depth of your souls.
Rejoice, that by hard fasting, dedication, confession and prayers you have purified yourselves.
Rejoice, that you have been willing to receive the Holy Sacraments
Rejoice that the most pure love is perfected among you.
Rejoice that your brotherhood has obtained the kingdom of heaven.
Rejoice, that the Romanian Orthodox Church has you as a priceless crown
Rejoice that the Church throughout the world honors you together
Rejoice, that it is not your own glory, but the glory of the Church you have willed.
Rejoice, Holy Confessors, who in prison the Golgotha of the Romanian nation you have climbed!

11th Kontakion:
The terrible persecution that was unleashed upon the country of the true believers spared neither the children nor the woman's nature, and like the martyrs of old, multitudes of Romanian women boldly confessed their love for Christ and their nation, singing to God: Alleluia!

11th Ikos:

The faithful were terrified when they saw a mangled body of a woman brought to be burned, and the stony-hearted executioners, not realizing that there was life in the body, they hastily threw it into the furnace, and the flames roared with a dull roar, and we, trembling at such things, cry out in fear:
Rejoice, you weak bodies with hardened souls.
Rejoice, you have boldly confessed Christ.
Rejoice that you have been like the women of old.
Rejoice that you have endured many kinds of torments for many years.
Rejoice that for your sufferings Christ gave you His Grace
Rejoice that you have shown yourselves to be wise guides one to another and to us all.
Rejoice, for you have followed the saints of all ages, full of humility and constancy.
Rejoice, that by your sacrifice you have spiritually given birth to the whole nation.
Rejoice, for your marvelous love and your prayers have guided our steps.
Rejoice, that you are our protectors and our swift helpers.
Rejoice, with the Blessed Virgin, holy company of virgins.
Rejoice, for you have loved eternal life more than transitory life.
Rejoice, Holy Confessors, who in prison the Golgotha of the Romanian nation you have climbed!

12th Kontakion:
The divine grace has shaded you in a marvelous way, Saints, and in the prisons of Pitesti, Aiud, Gherla, Sighet, Baia Sprie, Targu Ocna and Canal you endured many kinds of sufferings, and you knowing that all for the forgiveness and salvation of the Romanian Christian nation were permitted by Christ and ordained for you to overcome them, you have entrusted yourselves to Him forever chanting: "Hallelujah!

12th Ikos:

As nothing you have considered this earthly life and your souls you have put down for Orthodoxy and ancestors, and now at the painless and sorrowless threshold you rejoice, with all the righteous praising God and hearing from us such things as these:
Rejoice, ye wings in flight lifted up.
Rejoice, you faces of grace illumined
Rejoice, O ye souls of the unfailing
Rejoice, for the world has wrongfully hated you
Rejoice, rays in the darkness lit
Rejoice, arms outstretched to heaven
Rejoice, you saints with eternal names
Rejoice, you white-wreathed temples
Rejoice, ye rivers of pure waters
Rejoice, ye branches laden with fruit
Rejoice, you messengers who have done good
Rejoice, you granite-faced rocks
Rejoice, Holy Confessors, who in prison have climbed the Golgotha of the nation!

13th Kontakion:
O Holy Confessors, who in prison have endured torments of many kinds, and for the Resurrection of the Christian-Romanian nation have valiantly received the death of martyrs, having boldness towards Christ God, pray that we may be delivered from all devilish deceit, and that we may confess the Orthodox faith with good will, that in being saved we may praise God for ever: Alleluia!

(this kontakion is said three times).

Then again the first Ikos is said: From the icon and from the altar... and the first Kontakion: The Chosen Confessors... Then this is read:

PRAYER to the Roman Saints from prisons

O Holy Confessors, who in dungeons and persecutions, through your many sufferings have restrained the wicked one's wickedness, the wicked one with wrath set upon the Church of Christ, to you who have suffered hunger, frost, beatings, humiliation and torments of all kinds in defense of the law of our ancestors, we offer our thanks. As those who have done well for the resurrection of the Romanian nation, and now with the angels and archangels you rejoice in the light of the Uncreated Light of the heavenly kingdom, please do not cease to intercede to the Most High God to give us forgiveness of sins and to keep us and His Holy Church from the invasion of other nations, unbelief and war between us.

Grant that we may always walk in the way of salvation, patience and love, so that we may remain steadfast and united in the true faith until the end of our lives.

So, Holy Confessors, who in the trials and tribulations of your earthly life have asked for help from the heavenly powers, we pray to you, we the unworthy ones, that you will receive our prayers at this hour and cover us from the sorrows of this age and the wickedness of the adversaries, so that we too, on the narrow way full of crosses, may proclaim the Gospel of Christ, to the glory of God and the salvation of the Romanian nation, Amen.

Final Notes:

1. This Akathist was written at the request of Elder Justin Parvu and you can see him (the Elder) praying this in the Church on YouTube at this link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgQfkXbGimc

2. The Second Ikos is referring to Ion Moța and Vasile Marin, two out of the five founders (Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, Ion Moța, Vasile Marin, Radu Mironovici and Ilie Gârneață) of the "Legion of Archangel Michael" who went to Spain to fight in the Spanish Civil War against the Communists and were martyred together there.
To quote Ion Moța himself from the Testament/Last Will he wrote: "A machine gun was being fired in the cheek of Christ! The Christian world was shaking! Could we stand by? I understood the duty of my life. I loved Christ and went happily to my death for Him! (...) Let us not let our descendants lose the soulful blessings of the Birth of the Redeemer! Let us not leave a country without churches, without icons, without the protection of the hand of God! Let us not leave our children a life in which they will have lost Christ!"
For those who want to read more about them, I would recommend using deepL to translate this article from Romanian into English:
Sinaxary of the Saints in Prison: Legionary martyrs Ion Moța and Vasile Marin - 82 years since the confession of Christ through the supreme sacrifice: the martyrdom

Also after reading the first link I would also recommend to English readers to read this article in English about Saint Ion Moța by Mike Rienzi: M O Ț A 'S A S H E S

I will also add their Wikipedia pages in English here:

Ion Moța's Wikipedia page:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ion_Mo%C8%9Ba

Vasile Marin's Wikipedia page:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasile_Marin

3. This Akathist is mostly referring to (though not exclusively) the Pitești experiment (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pite%C8%99ti_Prison)

4. The title "The Saint of the Prison" is referring to Holy Valeriu Gafencu

5. The Eleventh Ikos is about the martyrdom of Legionary woman (Saint) Nicoleta Nicolescu. She was tortured, raped and then cremated while still alive.
Note: her ashes were apparently recovered and brought to the Predeal monastery in 1940. It seems that the later communist regime would be frightened by the martyrs' graves, as the Securitate was informed that in Predeal the Abbot Dionisie Velea (moved by Patriarch Justinian as first-priest at the patriarchal cathedral) "allowed the monk Nicandru Prodan to bring legionaries for clandestine meetings and to shelter the bones of Nicoleta Nicolescu, holding special services for her".

For reading more about her story I recommend using deepL and translating this link into English.

6. There is a website in English where everyone who accesses it can read about almost every particular saint and confessor from the communist prisons in Romania. These are the two links: the main page and the index of martyrs

7. The feast day of the Romanian Saints from the Prisons is 14 May because of this reason:
https://saccsiv.wordpress.com/2014/04/23/coincidenta-14-mai-1948-infiintarea-statului-israel-14-mai-1948-10-000-de-arestari-in-romania/

8. The relics of those saints were shown to exude holy myrrh:
https://www.ziaristionline.ro/2013/04/11/cedry2k-bodyguard-al-unor-sfinte-moaste-de-la-aiud-marturiseste-despre-o-minune-conferinta-azi-la-libraria-sophia/

https://atitudini.com/2023/10/sfintii-inchisorilor-izvoratori-de-mir-si-protectori-in-pandemie-pe-meleaguri-americane/

https://atitudini.com/2023/08/sfintii-inchisorilor-fac-minuni-in-bisericile-in-care-sunt-pusi-la-inchinare-2/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msre7TmTbOc

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nzd2K3UWJJA

The miracle of the Prison Saints was repeated again this year at the conference in Iași, through the intercession of St. Justin Parvu and St. Elijah Lacătușu

The miracle at Iasi - A skull gushed myrrh on March 19, 2014

9. The Holy Confessor Valeriu Gafencu recently appeared to his still living sister and told her to urge the people to not stop looking for his holy relics cause they will find them/him:
https://danielvla.wordpress.com/2019/09/23/sfantul-valeriu-gafencu-catre-sora-sa-valentina-draga-cautati-ma-ca-ma-veti-gasi/

Through their holy prayers may God protect us!

ENDING

SFINȚII ROMÂNI
DIN ÎNCHISORI
MAICA
DOMNULUI